

 NAZARBAYEV UNIVERSITY	Autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University		
	Approving body:	Provost	
Academic Policies and Procedures for the Zero Year of Master’s Programs of the autonomous organization of education “Nazarbayev University”			
Date of approval:	16.10.2020	Date of entering into force	<i>16.10.2020</i>
Decision/Minutes No.:	No. 131-Н/К		
Bylaw classification:	2.8. Academic Policies and Procedures		
Initiator:	R. Doebler General Director of Center for Preparatory Studies		
Related documents	Regulation on Leave of Absence, Dismissal and Voluntary Withdrawal for students of the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures of the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University		

1. General Provisions

1. These Academic Policies and Procedures for the Zero Year of Master’s Programs of the autonomous organization of education “Nazarbayev University” (hereinafter - Rules) were developed in compliance with the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On the Status of Nazarbayev University, Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools, and Nazarbayev Fund” and the Charter of the autonomous organization of education “Nazarbayev University”.

2. Basic definitions and abbreviations used in these Rules are:

1) **University** – autonomous organization of education “Nazarbayev University”;

2) **CPS** – Center for Preparatory Studies of the University, an academic division of the University in which the Zero Year of Master’s Programs is offered;

3) **Zero Year** – a two-semester, non-credit bearing, full-time intensive English and refresher course of study for students accepted into an NU master’s degree program but who lack the English requirement necessary for immediate entry into the Schools;

4) **Schools (School)** – Nazarbayev University Schools that offer graduate degree programs;

5) **IELTS** (International English Language Testing System, Academic version) – a standardized test that describes an individual’s English language ability;



IELTS is jointly managed by the British Council, IDP Education, and Cambridge English Language Assessment;

6) **OR** – Office of the Registrar;

3. Terms and definitions not used in these Rules shall be defined by the internal documents of the University.

4. The Schools' shall follow their own admission policies for accepting students into the Zero Year.

5. CPS is responsible for the record and storage of the documents, control of their condition and safekeeping prior to transferring them to the University archives.

2. Admission to the Zero Year of Master's Programs

6. Admission to the Zero Year will be in accordance with the capacity of CPS and the appropriate School's admissions policy. Changes in admission standards shall not apply retroactively.

7. Students are admitted to the Zero Year based on their acceptance into a School's master's program; therefore, no transfers in master's program or School will be permitted during the Zero Year.

3. First and Second Semester Curricula

8. The Zero Year operates on the basis of an academic year divided into two periods: Fall and Spring Semesters. An Induction/Orientation period takes place at the beginning of the Fall Semester to assist students in adapting to the University and the program requirements. Dates of both semesters, final examinations, and other key dates are indicated on the Zero Year Academic Calendar for that academic year.

9. In the Fall Semester, all students will focus solely on developing their academic English and critical thinking skills.

10. In the Spring Semester, students will continue developing their academic English and critical thinking skills, but in addition, students will generally take a refresher course(s).

4. Grades

11. The Zero Year courses will be graded in accordance with the grading criteria shown in the Grading Standards and Records section of this document.

5. Grading Standards and Records

12. Letter Grades, Grade Points, Percentage Ranges, and the corresponding explanations are outlined below. These will be communicated to Zero Year students by CPS staff and included in the course syllabi.

Letter	Grade	Percentage	Explanation
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Grade	Points		
A	4.00	95 – 100%	Excellent; exceeds the highest standards of the assignment or course
A-	3.67	90 – 94%	Excellent; meets the highest standards of the assignment or course
B+	3.33	85 – 89%	Very good; meets high standards for the assignment or course
B	3.00	80 – 84%	Good; meets most of the standards for the assignment or course
B-	2.67	75 – 79%	Near Pass; meets many of the standards for the assignment or course, but is insufficient for a passing mark
C+	2.33	70 – 74%	Near Pass; meets several of the standards for the assignment or course, but is insufficient for a passing mark
C	2.00	65 – 69%	Insufficient; may meet some of the basic standards for the assignment or course
C-	1.67	60 – 64%	Insufficient; falls short of meeting essential standards
F	0.0	0 – 59%	Failing; indicates almost no understanding of or effort in the assignment or course

6. Administrative Grades

13. In the Zero Year, a number of special administrative grades are used on transcripts. These administrative notations, which are listed below, do not affect the calculation of GPA:

1) **Incomplete “I”.** When a student has completed a substantial portion of the requirement for the course, but due to extreme extenuating circumstances is unable to complete all requirements, the instructor may assign a temporary grade of “I”.

The grade “I” can be given only on the basis of a written prior agreement which describes the work that is expected and the terms under which it is to be completed, between the student and the instructor and approved by the General Director of CPS. The date for completion of work is to be determined by the course instructor.

All work must be completed no later than the end of the last week of the subsequent semester. When the work or examination that is required under an “I” agreement is completed, the course instructor shall request a change of the “I” grade to the appropriate grade for the course, at which time the grade of “I” will be removed from the student’s transcript.

A grade of “I” may also be applied to a student who cannot take part in a final examination because of personal health problems or due to an emergency of an



immediate family member in accordance with the internal documents of the University. A new deadline will be set for completion of the final examination.

The grade of “I” is assigned 0 (zero) credits, has no grade points, and is not included in the calculation of the GPA.

A grade of “I” that is not completed by the end of the last week of the subsequent semester automatically reverts to the grade indicated in the agreement between the course instructor and the students. If no grade is indicated in the agreement and the instructor does not submit the change of grade request, the grade of “I” will revert to an “F”.

2) **“AW” – Administrative Withdrawal.** “AW” indicates that a student has been ordered withdrawn from a course on disciplinary grounds, following procedures and standards specified in the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures of the University.

3) **“S” – Satisfactory.** This grade indicates that the student has exhibited acceptable achievement in all areas of academic performance.

4) **“NS” – Non-satisfactory.** This grade indicates that the student has not exhibited acceptable achievement in most or all areas of academic performance.

7. Cause for Concern Reports

14. Throughout the program, Zero Year teaching fellows and instructors will inform the CPS Senior Teaching Fellow for Student Advising of any student with whom there is a “Cause for Concern” based on academic performance, attendance, or behavioral issues.

15. The template for identifying students with Cause for Concern is provided in Appendix 1 hereto.

8. Final Course Grades

16. Final grades are assigned to students at the end of both semesters in each course taken.

17. The Zero Year Head of Discipline submits grades for all students in all classes via My Registrar database by 5:00 p.m. (17:00) on the date specified on the Zero Year Academic Calendar. The OR will make all final grades available to students on the date stated in the Zero Year Academic Calendar.

9. Change of Grade

18. The final grade assigned to a student by the course instructor or designated faculty member at the end of term is the student’s final grade for that course.

No grades can be changed after the first day of the next semester or after the final decision on appeal.

19. Resit of a final course examination is not permitted with the exception for comprehensive examinations as provided in the Handbook.



20. Procedures for final course grade change:

- 1) If a student's grade has been assigned incorrectly due to a technical or procedural error, or miscalculation of grade, the course instructor should complete a "Change of Grade" form from the OR.
- 2) The Change of Grade form must be signed by the course instructor and General Director of CPS.
- 3) The General Director will review the requested change to ensure that University policies have been followed.
- 4) The approved form is submitted by the School to the OR (no forms are accepted from students) for review and approval and entry to the student's record.

10. Attendance and Change of Status

21. A student who violates the attendance policy may be dismissed from the program. The attendance policy requires that a student attend a minimum of 90% of all scheduled classes. This is continually emphasized and monitored by all instructors and staff.

22. A student may voluntarily withdraw from the Zero Year in accordance with the internal documents of the University.

23. A Zero Year student is considered to be in a deferred conditional status of the University Master's Program to which they were accepted. In order to change from this status, a student must successfully complete the Zero Year by passing all English courses with a minimum grade of B (i.e., 80%, if the Master's Program requires 6.5 IELTS) or the grade of B+ (i.e., 85%, if the Master's Program requires 7.0 IELTS) and, if applicable, the Schools' refresher course or courses with a minimum grade of B. In addition, students must achieve a minimum of 90% attendance with no excused absences. If the Zero Year student fails to achieve the required passing grades and/or the attendance requirement, he/she shall be dismissed from the program in accordance with the internal documents of the University. Students who do not achieve the required grades in the Zero Year or cannot continue with graduate studies may apply for direct admission to a master's program in the following academic year.

24. Should a student meet all the requirements above, their status will automatically be changed from "deferred conditional" to "unconditional" by the OR who also notifies the appropriate Dean and the School of the student's change of status.

11. Course Assessment and Evaluation

25. "Course assessment and evaluation" refers to the formal and summative assessment of student learning regardless of the specific means used. Examinations, including final examinations, may include in-class, take-home or oral examinations, or appropriate substitutes, such as, papers or projects or any combination thereof.



The choice of the assessment type is guided by the material upon which the student is being assessed and the program and course learning outcomes.

26. In-semester examinations are normally held during regular teaching hours.

27. Examinations held outside of regular teaching hours, on a Friday after 4:30 p.m. (16:30), or any time on Saturday or Sunday must be approved by the General Director. If an examination is administered outside of class time, CPS administration must announce the date and time at least two weeks prior to the examination date.

28. All scheduled final examinations are held during the Zero Year's official final examination period.

29. Course instructors are expected to return all assigned course work in a timely manner (typically within 15 days) or to provide equivalent feedback sufficient to prepare students for the final examination.

30. Students must arrive at the examination room a minimum of ten (10) minutes before the exam begins.

31. Specific examination rules and procedures will be made available to students in a separate document. In addition, all rules concerning the administration of examinations will be explained to the students before the start of an exam.

32. All examinations will be conducted in English.

33. Students absent from an examination will be given a mark of zero (0).

34. Students who are absent from other forms of assessment or do not submit coursework will be given a mark of zero (0).

35. If a medical or other emergency causes a student to miss an examination or other form of assessment, it is the student's responsibility to complete a Mitigating Circumstances Form as soon as possible and prior to the assignment of final grades. The CPS Mitigating Circumstances form is provided in Appendix 2 hereto.

36. A final examination that is not returned to the students will be stored in a secure location for review purposes. These exams will be stored in accordance with University policies on exam storage.

12. Student Examination Conduct

37. Students will be required to present a current Zero Year student identity card when entering an examination hall, and to display this card on their desks during the entire examination period.

38. Students are required to observe all instructions given by examiners, supervisors, invigilators, or other officers responsible for the conduct of the examinations. The following rules apply to all examinations:

1) Talking to anyone other than the invigilator in the examination room is not permitted.

2) Students must not bring cell phones, smart watches, cameras, or any other type of electronic device or any personal items into the exam room unless they are used as part of the examination process.

3) Students must stop working at the end of the time allowed for the exam. Continuing to work on the examination after the time has ended will be considered academic misconduct and will be subject to disciplinary actions and penalties as



outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures of the University.

4) Communicating answers or information to other students is a serious academic misconduct. Students who assist others in an assessment of any kind are subject to disciplinary actions and penalties as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures of the University.

5) Bottles of water without labels can be brought into the examination room. No other food or drink should be brought into the examination room. Medications that might be required during the exam need to be approved by the Head of Discipline or invigilator prior to the examination.

13. Program Review

39. The Zero Year of Master's Programs will undergo regular program reviews as an element of the quality assurance review. The responsibilities of the reviewer and the manner and frequency in which the program is reviewed shall be determined by the General Director of CPS and subject to University policies and regulations.

14. Dismissals and Voluntary Withdrawals

40. The Zero Year of Master's Programs shall follow the internal documents of the University regarding dismissal and voluntary withdrawals of students.

15. Leave of Absence

41. A Zero Year student may request and be considered for a leave of absence only for medical reasons or an emergency of an immediate family member in accordance with the internal documents of the University.

16. Additional Issues and Coverage

42. Any issues not covered in this document shall be regulated by the internal documents of CPS and the University.



Annex 1
to Academic Policies and
Procedures for the Zero Year of
Master's Programs of the University

**Zero Year of Master's Programs
Cause for Concern Report**

Use this form to report concerns regarding a Zero Year Program student's academic performance, attitude or behavior in class and general physical/mental health and welfare. Before the report is raised, attempts should be made to discuss any of the issues with the student directly. If the student's academic performance, attitude, or behavior does not improve after the discussion, complete and submit this form to the administration office.

Student Information

Student name:

Group:

Student email:

Teaching Fellow name:

Teaching Fellow email:

General Nature of the Cause for Concern

- Academic Performance Low Attendance Class behavior
- Erratic/Non-submission of Course-work Welfare
- Other (Please Describe)

Description of Concern

Date:

Location: (e.g. tutorial/class/lab, etc.)

Summary of Action Requested by Tutor – Step 1



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Suggested Referral Route (Please check the appropriate box)

- Head of Discipline (relating to academic matters: performance / attendance / course-work)
- Senior Teaching Fellow in Student Advising (relating to welfare requiring referral to Counselling office or doctor's intervention)
- General or Deputy Director (in cases of extreme urgency when a student may be at risk to himself / herself or others)

Action taken – Step 2

Any Further Action required? By whom? – Step 3

Confidential: For office use only to be attached to student file

Report received by

Date

Follow-up actions (indicate date, action taken and by whom)

Attach additional sheets if necessary



Annex 2
to Academic Policies and
Procedures for the Zero Year of
Master's Programs of the University

REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION OF MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Student Information

Full Name			
ID		Email	
Phone		School	

Assessment(s) To Be Considered (use another page if necessary)

Course	Type of Assessment (e.g., exam)	Date Due	Assessment Weighting

Mitigating Circumstances For Consideration (use another page if necessary)

Please describe in detail the circumstances that you believe have affected your academic performance.	
Please state the exact dates of the period(s) affected by these circumstances.	
Please list the supporting documents that you have attached in support of your request of mitigating circumstances.	
Student Affirmation: I confirm that the information given is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge. (Note that a false or misleading statement is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures of the University and could result in actions by the Academic Integrity Committee.)	
Signature	Date
Received by	Date
Recommendation of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel	
The Panel recommends the following action be taken in respect to this claim:	
Chair	Date

